



As Washington increases opportunities for more programs to provide high quality preschool, the need to tailor service options to meet the needs of children and families also increases.

Shared Services

Washington has begun using Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge funds to create Early Achievers Resource Alliances as part of a Shared Service Alliance strategy. This allows high quality preschool programs to share resources and services with child care programs in their region who are participating in Early Achievers. Six Early Achievers Resource Alliance contracts now exist in the state. These Head Start and ECEAP programs share a wide variety of services with surrounding child care programs (see inset).

In 2014, DEL is working to ensure that shared services are planned with local community partners and meet the specific needs of the families, communities and programs served. Although still in the initial stages of development, the Early Achievers Resource Alliance concept is a key strategy to ensure that all early learning organizations have access to individualized supports and comprehensive services, and opportunities for shared community professional learning. This strategy builds on the expertise and experience of the strong cadre of comprehensive preschool programs in the state, and decreases the silos that often separate programs.

Through this shared services approach, high quality preschool programs that do not have experience providing comprehensive supports, but have families and children in need of these services, can connect families through the shared services model. This strategy will also enable more high quality programs across the state to meet the preschool performance standards and become eligible for preschool slots through expansion, particularly smaller programs.

Differentiated Services

Not all children and families have the same needs for services. To best target the right services to each child and family, DEL is exploring strengths-based needs assessments for preschool families to determine the types and intensity of services that are needed for each family. A consistent, statewide approach to this type of assessment will enable providers to target the appropriate type of comprehensive services for each family – some children will need more services and others less.

Preschool providers may also have the opportunity to apply for additional supports if they serve a large percentage of children with special needs or dual language learners. These supports may include funds to employ a third person in the classroom to assist during key times of the day or to employ bilingual assistants to assist with orienting children to the classroom routine in their home language. These extra supports are not meant to create permanent additional staffing, but to augment staff on a temporary basis to support a skilled lead teacher, assistant and preschool coach team.

2013 Shared Services

- Training on developmental screening
- Parenting classes and parent engagement and leadership activities
- Family support and health services, including sharing family support staff across programs
- Training/resources on the CLASS tool
- Supports for dual language learners (DLL) such as staff training on DLL instructional strategies, shared use of interpreters and translators
- Reflective practice and professional learning among teachers and coaches from across different programs